

COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES – February 6, 2017

The meeting of the Township Council of the Township of Lower, County of Cape May, State of New Jersey was held on February 6, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. in the meeting room of the Township Hall, 2600 Bayshore Road, Villas, New Jersey.

The Clerk announced that the meeting was being held in compliance with the Open Public Meetings Act and that adequate notice of the meeting had been provided according to law.

The following members of Council were present for roll call taken by the Clerk:

Councilmember Thomas Conrad
Councilmember David Perry
Councilmember Roland Roy, Jr.
Deputy Mayor Frank Sippel
Mayor Erik Simonsen

Also present: James Ridgway, Township Manager, Robert Belasco, Township Solicitor and Karen Fournier, Deputy Township Clerk

Swearing in of three (3) new officers – Mayor Simonsen

Mayor Simonsen administered oaths of office to the following officers:

Patrolman Kenneth Walker was accompanied by his parents; and his mother, Donna Walker, held the Bible.

Patrolman James Mathis was accompanied by his parents; and his mother, Jacqueline Mathis, held the Bible.

Patrolman William Kocis was accompanied by his family; and his mother, Bernadette Kocis, held the Bible.

Captain Biersbach thanked Mayor and Council and congratulated the new officers on their great accomplishment.

Work Session

2017 Budget Message/Introduction – Manager Jim Ridgway / CFO Lauren Read / Auditor Leon Costello

Manager Ridgway introduced the proposed 2017 municipal budget that includes a 1.8 cent property tax rate increase. He said the increase is due in part to a decrease in mercantile license revenue of \$70,000 and an additional \$750,000 in payments to the county for dispatch services and lease payments which he anticipates will bring significant savings moving forward. He pointed out an increase in the tax levy of \$710,292.68 and informed that the budget is \$827,032.05 below the legal spending cap. The 2016 surplus is a record high of \$6,579,408.70; due to a 98.67 percent tax collection rate together with other miscellaneous revenues. Of that balance, \$2,525,000 is being applied to the 2017 budget, with projections to fully restore what is used. This budget plans for an increase in services in our Office of Emergency Management, Police Department and Construction Office. This budget also includes a well planned capital program; increased by an additional \$100,000 for capital projects planned for 2017. The public hearing is scheduled for March 20, 2017 at 7:00 p.m. A budget summary will be posted in the Cape May Star and Wave, posted on the Township website, and available in the Clerk's office at Town Hall.

Leon Costello, Municipal Auditor, Ford-Scott & Assoc., outlined the budget process and confirmed that this budget represents sound financial stability.

Councilman Conrad thanked Lauren Read and all Township departments for their work on the budget.

Mayor Simonsen commented on the impressive surplus and thanked Lauren Read and Leon Costello for their work.

Res. #2017-63

Introduction of 2017 Budget – Budget hearing and Adoption scheduled for March 20, 2017

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD		X	X			
PERRY	X		X			
ROY			X			
SIPPEL			X			
SIMONSEN			X			

Consent Agenda

Approval of Minutes January 18, 2017

Approval of Closed Session Minutes - January 18, 2017

Res. #2017-64 Payment of Vouchers \$549,633.55

- Res. #2017-65 A Resolution Approving the Acceptance and Participation in the State of New Jersey, Department of Law and Public Safety Emergency Management Agency (EMAA) Sub-grant (\$9,400)
- Res. #2017-66 Amending Resolution #2016-171; to Change Budget Appropriation (from Ord #14-10 415-910 to Ord #13-10 414-220)
- Res. #2017-67 A Resolution Authorizing Competitive Contracting for Feasibility Study for an Aquatic Center for the Township of Lower
- Res. #2017-68 2017 Distracted Driving Crackdown. U Drive. U Text. U Pay (April 1 – April 21, 2017)
- Res. #2017-69 A Resolution Commemorating the 30TH Anniversary of the Atlantic County Municipal Joint Insurance Fund
- Res. #2017-70 A Resolution Requesting Release of A Maintenance Guarantee for Family Promise; Block 494.03; Lot 19.05; Escrow Z12-07-04
- Res. #2017-71 Bid Rejection for Two (2) Standby Generator Set Replacements for Public Works and Recreation Department (exceeds cost estimates)
- Res. #2017-72 Transfer of 2016 Appropriations (\$5,000)
- Res. #2017-73 Replacing Resolution #2015-54 (Manager governed by Personnel Policy Manual)
- Res. #2017-74 Approval for Roadside Solicitation by Erma Volunteer Fire Company (5/27, 7/1 and 9/2/2017)
- Res. #2017-75 Approving the Installation of a Cummings Motor For Garbage Truck #33 (\$20,719.94)
- Ordinance #2017-02 An Ordinance of the Township of Lower Establishing Requirements for the Installation of A Key Box Rapid Entry System on Certain Industrial, Commercial and Residential Structures. - 1st reading of this Ordinance. 2nd reading and public hearing has been scheduled for WEDNESDAY, February 22, 2017.
- Ordinance #2017-03 An Ordinance Amending Chapter 67, Municipal Utilities Authority, of the Code of the Township of Lower 1st reading of this Ordinance. 2nd reading and public hearing has been scheduled for WEDNESDAY, February 22, 2017.
- Ordinance #2017-04 An Ordinance Amending Ordinance #2015-07; Chapter 178, Beaches, of the Code of the Township of Lower 1st first reading of this Ordinance. 2nd reading and public hearing has been scheduled for WEDNESDAY, February 22, 2017.

MOTION TO TABLE Ordinance #2017-02 moved by Deputy Mayor Sippel, Seconded by Mayor Simonsen:

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X			
PERRY				X		
ROY			X			
SIPPEL	X		X			
SIMONSEN		X	X			

Frank Sarraco, NCM, addressed Council regarding Ordinance #2017-02 to stress the need for emergency access. Mayor Simonsen agreed that there is a safety concern but indicated that clarification is needed in the language before the Ordinance is adopted.

Solicitor Belasco communicated the basis for the Ordinance and agreed to make necessary revisions upon Council's request.

Councilman Perry argued that the Ordinance is intended for rental properties with alarm systems, and that it will lessen the burden on the Fire Departments.

Councilman Conrad commented in favor of the Ordinance.

On the Consent Agenda:

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD	X		X			
PERRY			X			
ROY			X			
SIPPEL		X	X			
SIMONSEN			X			

Regular Agenda

Ordinance #2017-01

An Ordinance to Exceed the Municipal Budget Appropriation Limits and to Establish A

Cap Bank (N.J.S.A. 40A:4-45.15a). This is the second reading and public hearing of this Ordinance. This Ordinance has been published, posted and made available to the public.

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X			
PERRY	X		X			
ROY		X	X			
SIPPEL			X			
SIMONSEN			X			

Council Comments

Councilman Conrad congratulated the six new Officers sworn in to the Villas Fire Company.

Councilman Perry gave an update on the LTMUA water line installation for Roseann Avenue, and reported the progress with the beach access paths in North Cape May.

Councilman Roy informed of his communication with the County to address a safety issue at the intersection of Breakwater Rd. and Route 9.

Deputy Mayor Sippel communicated that he is working with Cape Assist on combating the drug addiction issues in the Township.

Mayor Simonsen spoke of swearing in the Officers of the Federation of Senior Citizens for Lower Township, and the success of the Szczyt the Day event. He also announced the NJ Run for the Fallen fund raiser, Sat. Feb 25, and recommended contacting Eileen Kreis for more information.

Call to the Public

Russ Ryan, 220 Mindy Ave., addressed Council to voice support for the bike path along Beach Drive in NCM. Mayor Simonsen informed that safety concerns as well as ADA compliance are being addressed.

Rita Edwards, Townbank, inquired about Res. #2017-67, the aquatic center.

Manager Ridgway explained that the feasibility study will include building and operational costs. He also gave a brief description of the plan for an aquatic center.

Ms. Edwards voiced her support and made reference to Ocean City getting funding for their aquatic center.

Mayor Simonsen and Manager Ridgway both indicated that the Township will be exploring funding option.

Closed Session

Res. #2017-76

Resolution Providing for a Meeting Not Open to the Public in Accordance with the Provisions of the New Jersey Open Public Meetings Act, N.J.S.A. 10:4-12. **Collective Negotiations / Possible Litigation**

	MOTION	SECOND	AYE	NAY	ABSTAIN	ABSENT
CONRAD			X			
PERRY	X		X			
ROY			X			
SIPPEL		X	X			
SIMONSEN			X			

Council adjourned to Closed Session at 7:47 p.m.

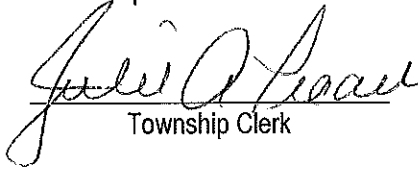
Council returned to open session at 9:05 p.m.

Adjournment

There being no further business to address, motion to adjourn moved by Councilmember Conrad, seconded by Councilmember Perry. Motion to adjourn unanimous. Meeting adjourned at 9:05 p.m.



 Mayor



 Township Clerk

Approved: Feb 22, 2017